



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2004

## V CORPS SOLDIERS MARCH THEIR WAY THROUGH GRUELING 100-MILE ANNUAL TREK

*Two stories:*

**1ST ARMORED DIVISION AIR DEFENDERS FINISH FIRST AMONG U.S. MILITARY TEAM IN NIJMEGEN MARCH**

**TEAMWORK TAKES TROOPS OF 69TH AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY THROUGH FOUR-DAY MARCH** (Click headline to jump to story)

**By Sgt. Gregory Withrow**

1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office

**WIESBADEN, Germany --** Iron Soldiers" from the air defense artillery battalion of V Corps' 1st Armored finished first among U.S. forces marching in this year's annual four-day, 100-mile trek in Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

"The march was pretty challenging," said 1st Lt. Daniel Shane in a tone of understatement, explaining how rough the march was on the team members' feet.

"Our medics took photos of the guys' feet," said Shane the executive officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery,



PHOTO COURTESY 1ST ARMORED DIVISION

The team members from the 1st Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery of V Corps' 1st Armored Division who completed the four-day, 100-mile annual march in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, pose for a group photo. The 10-Soldier team finished first among the 19 U.S. military teams in this year's march. Also pictured is the medal awarded for completing the grueling event.

"but even the guy in the worst shape toughed it out to finish the march."

Medics recommended that Pfc. Samuel Choe, an Avenger anti-aircraft gunner with Battery D, 1/4th ADA, drop out of the march on the second day. Choe proved his mettle and pushed on into the third day, sometimes held up by Sgt. McKenna Miller and 1st Lt. Andrew Wentzler.

Despite his pain, Choe slogged through the third day. On the fourth and final day, Choe and his nine teammates finished the march.

Of the 47,000 marchers who participated this year, organizers said 5,000 came from the military services of a variety of nations. The members of the 'By Daring Deeds' battalion pushed ahead to finish first of the 19 American military teams that participated this year.

After having returned from a year in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, 10 Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery, readied themselves for their grueling task by marching up to 40 kilometers per day in the countryside where they are stationed in Wackernheim, Germany.

The 10 team members received medals of recognition from the Dutch military, as well as Army Achievement Medals, for their efforts.

The 1-4 ADA team included the following Iron Soldiers:

- Pvt. 1st Class Steve Calloway
- Pvt. 1st Class Samuel Choe
- Spc. Eric Velasquez
- Sgt. Pale Hathwell
- Sgt. McKenna Miller
- Staff Sgt. Paul Caballero
- 1st Lt. Erhan Bedastani
- 1st Lt. Brian Curran
- 1st Lt. Andrew Wentzler
- and 1st Lt. Daniel Shane

## TEAMWORK TAKES TROOPS OF 69TH AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY THROUGH FOUR-DAY MARCH

**By Capt. J. Adam Falk**

69<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Artillery Brigade Public Affairs Office

**GIEBELSTADT ARMY AIRFIELD, Germany** – Sixteen Soldiers from V Corps' 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade trudged 100 miles over in the 88th annual International Nijmegen Four Days' Marches July 20-23 in Nijmegen, The Netherlands.



MAJ KYLE KOLTHOFF

Spc. Adam Klein, a Patriot missile launcher crewmember in V Corps' Battery C, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery, nurses his blistered feet during a rest stop at the International Nijmegen Four Days Marches in The Netherlands July 20-23. Klein was a member of the 69th ADA Brigade team participating in the annual 100 mile march.

The military portion of the event requires that the 160-kilometer march be completed wearing a military uniform and carrying a 10-kilogram (22 pound) rucksack — a grueling test of physical fitness and endurance.

"It's not a real heavy rucksack, but after 100 miles it starts to feel pretty heavy," said Maj. Kyle Kolthoff, 5th Battalion, 7th ADA executive officer and Nijmegen team member.

The Nijmegen Marches originated in 1909 with Dutch military efforts to increase the long-distance marching ability of the country's infantry Soldiers. The march evolved into an international event with military and civilian participants, though civilians may choose shorter distances each day. More than 47,000 marchers from 40-plus

countries took part this year as thousands of onlookers cheered them along the route.

"The first day was the worst, because it was the most difficult to judge the remaining distance. The following days were just a mind game to get through the marching and into the beer tent," said David S. Rayhall Jr., a Patriot system maintainer with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5/7th ADA.

"We spent about 30 to 45 minutes cheering the other teams as they arrived at the end of every day. It was a great experience. All the countries showed tremendous support for each other," said Rayhall.

The team-oriented approach enhanced the experience for the Soldiers, explained 1st Lt. Beth Archer, executive officer of C Battery, 5/7th ADA.

"Although most of the team hadn't met until a day before the event began, the Soldiers really molded together as a 69th ADA Brigade team. We had a great bunch of Soldiers that got to know each other well during those four days," said Archer.

Eleven of the Soldiers on the team came from 5/7th ADA, stationed in Hanau, Germany and the remaining five from 6th Battalion, 52nd ADA, stationed in Ansbach, Germany.

Kolthoff explained that he prepared with some of the Soldiers from 5/7th ADA on marches ranging from 10 to 20 miles for more than three months prior to the event.

"Marching 20 miles takes about six hours, so it's a huge investment of personal time to prepare for an event like this. There's a lot of pain that is endured during training and over the course of those four days. Everyone has to find the internal motivation to drive on through that pain in order to complete the march — it's really an internal competition for each individual," said Kolthoff.

"This was a great event," said Rayhall. "I definitely want to try to go again next year—I'd recommend it to anyone."

